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Education
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Allocating Teaching Resources Goes Back to Basics

A new approach to allocating teaching resources will place the needs of students, teachers and individual schools first in determining how teaching resources are distributed across the K-12 education system.

The Honourable Joan Burke, Minister of Education, today outlined a new method of allocating teaching resources based on the recommendations of an independent review and report entitled, *Education and Our Future: A Road Map to Innovation and Excellence*. The Williams Government will allocate $3.56 million in Budget 2008 to help school districts with their individual planning for school programming and teaching needs.

"The old numeric formula, if followed, would result in over 540 fewer teachers in the system this coming September," said Minister Burke. "We have recognized over the past three years, and for September 2008, that such reductions, despite a steady decline in student enrolment, are unworkable and with an annualized investment of $32.8 million, we have laid a solid foundation for a new, far more progressive approach to allocating teachers," said Minister Burke.

The new method is based on the premise that regardless of where a student lives or how many students attend a particular school, all are entitled to equal access, and to a quality education and opportunities to learn.

"It is this belief that led our government to commission a review of the teacher allocation formula and one that has guided the work of the commission and the development of a new approach to allocating our teaching resources. The focus now is on need, not numbers and I am confident the new model will serve our students and teachers extremely well for many years," said Minister Burke.

The commission's review brought forward 35 recommendations with 13 being accepted as is, four accepted with some variations, and 10 that will require further review. Four of the key recommendations being accepted speak to the fundamental shift from a numeric formula to a needs-based allocation method. As outlined in the report, the new model is based on two key elements – a focus on programming and teaching needs, and maximum class sizes in the K-9 system. Allocations will be determined by the particular circumstances, as outlined in district plans, of individual classrooms and schools.

Other highlights of the new allocation model include a reduction in maximum class sizes from Kindergarten to Grade 9 that build on the Blue Book commitment, a more generous allocation of specialist teachers, principals and assistant principals and the creation of instructional education officers to support student achievement, school leadership and school development.

The development of a new teacher allocation method follows the recent review of the ISSP/Pathways program and the Provincial Government's response to implement that report's recommendations.

Minister Burke noted that there are some recommendations that will require further research and analysis, including the number of guidance counsellors currently allocated in the system. "The responsibilities and workload of guidance counsellors is now being reviewed as part of our response to the ISSP/Pathways Commission and other initiatives being reviewed and implemented at this time," said Minister Burke. "My goal with this area of the education system, as with all others, is to ensure we are making sound, well-informed decisions that will have the most positive impact on our

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students."

Work will begin immediately on school district planning to inform the allocation of teachers for September 2008. New class sizes will be phased in over a three-year period, with Kindergarten and Grades 4 and 7 to be implemented for the upcoming school year.

"I would like to thank the reports authors, Brian Shortall and Noreen Greene-Fraize, for their tireless work on this review, as well as the many people across the education system including teachers, administrators, school district officials, and staff and parents, who helped inform the development of the report's recommendations and ultimately, the new allocation method we are introducing today," said Minister Burke.

More than $1 billion has been invested in education this year, impacting all aspects of the system.

"There is a tremendous level of commitment to improving our education system, clearly demonstrated in the teacher allocation review, as well as the ISSP/Pathways review and the many other initiatives we have introduced in recent years," said Minister Burke. "New laboratory supplies and skilled trades curriculum and equipment, state of the art physical education equipment, unprecedented investments in our school infrastructure and 25 additional teaching resources as part of the $11.3 million *Excellence in Mathematics Strategy* are all examples of new experiences we are providing to our students, and opportunities that will prepare them for a bright, promising future in Newfoundland and Labrador."

The report of the Teacher Allocation Commission, *Education and Our Future: A Road Map to Innovation and Excellence* can be accessed on-line at www.gov.nl.ca/edu.

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BACKGROUNDER

Highlights of the New Teacher Allocation Method

Allocation of Specialist Teachers

Specialists teach music, physical education, fine arts, French, and literacy and numeracy. They are currently allocated to Grades 7 – 12 at a ratio of one specialist for every 250 students, with no specialist teachers allocated for Grades K – 6. Under the new allocation method, specialists will be allocated to all grade levels at a ratio of one specialist for every 175 students.

Allocation of administrative time to school (principals and assistant principals)

Old Allocation			New Allocation	
Number of pupils	Admin FTE		Number of pupils	Admin FTE
1 – 74	0.25 units		1 – 74	0.5 units
75 – 149	0.5 unit		75 – 174	1.0 unit

150 – 249	0.75 units		175 – 249	1.25 units
250 – 399	1.00 units		250 – 399	1.50 units
400 – 549	1.25 units		400 – 549	1.75 units
550 – 699	1.50 units		550 – 699	2.00 units
700 – 849	1.75 units		700 – 849	2.50 units
850 +	2.00 units		850 +	3.00 units

Instructional Education Officers

These are new positions which will be created to support student achievement, school leadership and school development.

Commission Recommendation			District Allocation	
Number of pupils	IEOs		District	IEOs
Up to 5000	1		Labrador	1
5001 – 20,000	3		Western	3
20,000 – 30,000	4		Nova Central	3
	Eastern	6		
	Conseil Scolaire Francophone	1		

Allocation of teachers based on class size maximums

Teachers will be allocated to school boards based on the following class size maximums:

Grade Level	Maximum Class Size
Kindergarten	20
Grades 1 – 3	25
Grades 4 – 6	25
Grades 7 – 9	27

A maximum class size provides an additional teaching unit once the maximum has been exceeded. A student-teacher ratio provides units based on the number of students divided by the ratio, as demonstrated below.

# teaching units		
Class Size maximum (25)	Student Teacher Ratio (25:1)	

37	37 ÷ 25 = 1.48 (i.e., 2 units allocated)	37 ÷ 25 = 1.48 (i.e., 1.48 units allocated)

The advantage of using a class size maximum is that classes will not exceed the maximum and schools will not lose a teaching unit due to declining enrolments. If, in the above example, the student population dropped by 9 students, the result would be as follows:

# teaching units		
Class Size maximum (25)	Student Teacher Ratio (25:1)	
27	28 ÷ 25 = 1.12 (i.e., 2 units allocated)	28 ÷ 25 = 1.12 (i.e., 1.12 units allocated)

Using a class size maximum there is no loss of teaching units

Implementation Schedule

Note: Class size maximum of 25 is currently in place for grades 1 – 3.

Year	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Grades	K, 4, 7	5, 8	6, 9

Allocations for multi-grade classes

Maximum Class Size		
Old	New	
K with any one other	15	15
K with any two others	12	12
K with any 3 others (e.g., K-3)	10	10
Any two primary	17	15
Three or more primary	14	14
Any two primary/elementary (e.g., 3-4)	18	15
Three or more primary/elementary	15	15

Any two elementary/intermediate	18	15
Three or more elementary/intermediate	15	15

Allocation of Learning Resource Specialists

Learning resource specialists will now be allocated at a level of one for every 750 students from Kindergarten to Level III, compared to the current one for every 1000 students.

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